THOMAS B. SMITHIES,

(Editor of the British Workman)

A MEMOIR

G. STRINGER ROWE.

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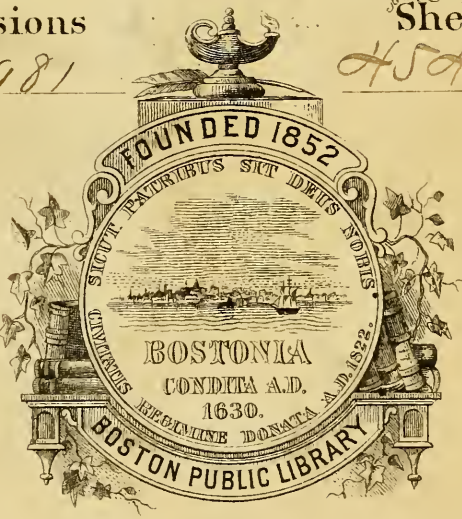

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Yours Sincerely

T. B. Smithies.

T. B. SMITHIES

(EDITOR OF "THE BRITISH WORKMAN").

A Memoir.

BY

G. STRINGER ROWE.

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THIS MEMOIR

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY, K.G.,

WHO KNEW AND LOVED THE SUBJECT OF IT WELL,

IN THE INTIMACY OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP,

AND FREQUENT ASSOCIATION OF

PHILANTHROPIC SERVICE.

PREFACE.

If any should think that a life filled with such manifold, extensive, and widely important work as that of Mr. Smithies, ought to have had a longer memorial record than that which is here given, the reply must be that he himself had a very strong objection to large memoirs. Without the most remote reference to the possibility of his ever being himself the subject of a book, he frequently expressed to me his settled opinion that a biography, in ordinary circumstances, should be of about the length of that which I have ventured to write concerning my dear friend. It may be further pointed out, that, beyond the simple

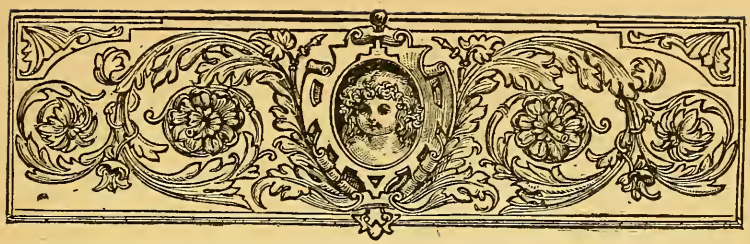
outlines of his various work, there was nothing to tell but the incidents which arose in its accomplishment. It would have been easier to begin such a detailed history than to determine its bounds.

In performing my task, while moved throughout by the impulse of an admiring love, I have jealously guarded my judgment against the bias of affection; and I cherish the belief that those who knew Mr. Smithies most intimately will acquit me of all charge of unfairness, as I am sure they will of exaggeration.

This sketch has been drawn up, not to demand admiration for a good man's character and doings, but to point out what manner of man he was, and what were his working principles, for the instruction of those who knew less of him than of his great successes; and thus, by the benefit of his example, to help forward the holy war of light against the darkness which is

in the world; and especially and evermore to point the supreme lesson that by a devout, believing, and dutiful oneness with the God of Light, can the victory be won, and that thus it can assuredly be won, even without the condition of brilliant gifts or great natural powers, or any favouring advantage of circumstances.

G. S. R.



T. B. SMITHIES.

IN the year 1817, in the city of York, a young mother bowed before God, and, by a solemn act of dedication, devoted her babe to His service.

There is no need, in writing this sketch, to seek back any further. Thomas Bywater Smithies came into the world undistinguished by illustrious pedigree. His ancestry was to be found, if one knew where to trace it, in the great multitude of whose genealogies the world keeps no record. But that sacrifice offered by holy mother-love is a sufficient starting-point, and the more because it not only begins, but goes so far to account for, the life which is to be here imperfectly portrayed.

This mother, still in her earliest woman-

hood, was no ordinary character. From her the boy inherited a clear and sagacious mind, an active readiness in forming a purpose, and a firm resolution and steady activity in carrying it out, combined in a rare degree with unselfishness, and governed by a warm-hearted tenderness and loving-kindness. These qualities came to him as natural gifts; but he owed yet more than these to parental influence. The worship of God was in the very heart and centre of the home; and the loyal service of God shaped everything in the household life.

How faithfully it was borne in mind that the child had been consecrated to God, was shown by the watchful care whereby he was trained in all righteousness. One incident, often told by Mr. Smithies, illustrates the jealous fidelity of this training. When he was about four years old, his father took him one day into a tinman's workshop. The bright clippings of metal which strewed the floor attracted the child, and he picked up two or three little bits of tin and put them in his pocket. When his mother was undressing him at night, she found these, and asked about them. The little fellow, who had no notion of concealment or

dishonesty, told her where he got them. It was a very small thing, but she saw in it an opportunity of teaching a great lesson; or rather, where truth and integrity were concerned, she could judge nothing to be trifling. The child was forthwith wrapped in a shawl and carried to the shop, which was near at hand, where, to the owner's great surprise, the bits of tin were restored.

Years afterwards, when engaged in his work of mercy in York Castle, Mr. Smithies was greatly shocked to find among the prisoners a young man whom he had known as a boy. He then recalled the fact that, when quite a child, that boy had secretly taken a little book from a bookseller's shop and brought it home. On discovering it, his mother reproved him, and pointed out the sinfulness of what he had done. She then sent back the book in such a way that the tradesman never knew it had been taken; and thus she lost the opportunity of teaching her child outright the lesson of honesty, even to complete restitution.

This one example of Mrs. Smithies' method is not exceptional. All was according to the same high standard, and carried out with the same vigilant faithfulness. If

so strict a rule seem to need apology or defence, surely it has its best justification in its own most excellent results. And if any one, judging herefrom, should picture to himself a hard, severe discipline, cramping and repressing a young life with its stern government, he would be far wrong. The strictness was shown in keeping the distinction between right and wrong, broad, clear, and never doubtful; and while the parental authority was used to fence out the wrong, parental love, with warmest tenderness and manifold ingenuity of invention, gathered together for the children, within the sacred enclosure of the right, all that was dearest, most winning, and most glad. So, amidst the comforts of a bright and happy home, this child grew up with the feeling in his heart, as clear and direct as an instinct, that all that was most joyous was one with all that was good; and in the consecrated temple of earthly love he unconsciously learned his first lessons in the love of God.

In all matters of Christian duty and privilege, Mrs. Smithies judged wisely that, while it was quite possible to begin the instruction of her children too late, she

could not begin too early. So she made sure of this, that the good seed should at least be beforehand with the thorns. Thus each child was taught the duty of consecrating its possessions to the Father in heaven; and with the very first money-gift there was provided a little box, into which a portion was to be put for the Lord. Mr. Smithies often spoke with great thankfulness of this. Before habits of selfishness could form themselves, he had begun to regard it as a great favour that he was permitted to devote something of his own to God; and the little store in "the Lord's Box" was added to time after time, not with a grudging sense of loss, but with a growing delight for love's sake.

Among the few details of Mr. Smithies' childhood which have been lovingly preserved, more in the traditions than the recollections of younger members of his family, we search now for those which stand upon the lines along which his character and life went thereafter into all that active goodness which we came to know so well. Inquiring with such motive, we come upon a simple little picture, which is full of significance. In it the principal figure is

one well known to a former generation of York citizens, in whose respectful esteem Benjamin Agar stood very high, while among York Methodists his memory has not yet lost the savour of its fine Christian example. Amongst other good works to which Mr. Agar addicted himself, he zealously promoted the distribution of religious tracts; and in our picture he is busy sorting and arranging tracts for this purpose. Beside him a little boy—so little that he has to stand on a stool that he may reach his work—is permitted, as a great treat, to help him. That little worker was Thomas Smithies, who was afterwards to give an altogether new life and character to the publication of tract literature. He was wont to refer to those early days of happy association with Mr. Agar as the date of his first interest in this great branch of Christian service.

The boyhood of Mr. Smithies seems to have had scarcely anything of conspicuous incident to mark it. It was, according to all testimony, singularly free from faults. The devoted faith and care with which the child had been consecrated and trained had their reward in his growing up as a disciple

of Jesus Christ. His mother lived to a ripe and beautiful old age; and, looking back over all the past, neither she nor his father could remember that their son had ever caused them a single wound.

There was a time, about his fifteenth year, when his Christian decision modestly stepped forth into open profession, and he became a Church-member among the Wesleyan Methodists. But the most loving memory of those most familiar with his course fails to recall any process of change which then showed itself in him.

At school, first in York, and afterwards in Doncaster, he made for himself a good reputation, and so won the esteem and confidence of the late Mr. Heigham, the principal of the school at Doncaster, that he urged him to remain with him to be trained as a teacher. In those days he had already reached an admired distinction, by the singular beauty of his handwriting, specimens of which in later days, when albums were much in vogue, were greatly sought after. Several times, as in the case of Mr. Heigham, people who saw the excellent qualities of the lad, were ready to designate him to one or another calling. But he was being re-

served and prepared for an altogether peculiar work, which he little suspected. His own idea was that he was to be a Missionary; and often, during his childhood, he had told his mother that he expected to go out to South Africa to join the Rev. Barnabas Shaw, adding, with eager simplicity, that she must therefore teach him everything, so that he might be fitted for the work.

At the age of sixteen, Thomas Smithies entered as a clerk into the office of the *Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company*, where he was to remain eighteen years, steadily rising, and gaining the respect and confidence of all by his order, punctuality, diligence, and kind courtesy.

He had already joined the old Wesley Place Sunday-school, in York, long since transferred to the Centenary Chapel rooms. In those days, a great part of the work in Sunday-schools was bestowed upon teaching children to read who had little, if any, other chance of instruction; and to this service young Smithies addressed himself with characteristic energy. The methods and appliances of teaching were then of the simplest and least attractive kind; and after a very few years our friend became greatly dis-

satisfied with this state of things. But he advanced no further, except in longing for something better. As yet he had not conceived the idea that it would ever be in his own power to help forward the work of progress and improvement. So he went on, making the best of the means at his disposal, and hailing with delight every new step in advance.

We shall see yet more of him in connection with Sunday-school affairs. At present we have to note another starting-point in his career of Christian devotion. He was about twenty when he declared himself a teetotaler, and took a decided stand as an advocate of entire abstinence in order to promote temperance. To this he had been led, among other causes, by the sad discoveries which he made of the effects of drunkenness in the homes which he visited while looking after his Sunday scholars. His action in this matter was very characteristic. He saw before him a course which his conscience told him was right; and that being made clear, all hesitation ceased. There was little else to attract him to the position which he now took up with uncompromising thoroughness; for the cause of total absti-

nence in those days was more than unpopular. It was disliked and discountenanced in nearly all Christian Churches throughout the land; and herein they certainly were not without some excuse. Amongst the early advocates of total abstinence were some who, with very clear and strong convictions upon the question themselves, were irritated by an apathy which they could not understand, and an opposition which, if not active, presented a dead, motionless hindrance to their progress. Hence came the conflict of heated and angry words, and, sometimes, of most uncharitable denunciations: and thus a good work was, for years, sorely obstructed. The assault upon ordinary methods of Christian thought, in regard to this matter, was, in some cases, so defiantly warlike, that Christian people put themselves instinctively into an attitude of defence, and simply shut out the whole subject. Good men sincerely dreaded the raising of the question, as it had unhappily become again and again the occasion of strife, division, and lamentable spiritual loss. In the present state of this movement, advancing as it is in widespread popularity and marvellous success, and re-

cognised as it has come to be by all Churches as a most important part of their work, it is hard to realize that, within so short a distance of time, the above description could be true.

No one felt more than Mr. Smithies the unwisdom and the wrong of that violence which characterized the doings of some with whom he now found himself associated. He greatly mourned over it, and certainly never lent it his own example. Still, amongst those more immediately connected with him in his earliest temperance work, he had but little cause to complain of their spirit and methods. Several of them were members of the Society of Friends, a community which had not hesitated to throw its influence on the side of this great moral and social reform, when other Churches held themselves aloof from it.

When Mr. Smithies espoused the temperance cause, fidelity to his convictions laid upon him a far heavier burden than general unpopularity. He found himself compelled to stand and act alone, without the fellowship and sympathy of friends whom he greatly loved: and thus, to his affectionate nature, the way of duty became

a way of much painful self-denial. The manner in which he afterwards, when all the strife was over, spoke of those days, showed how keenly he had suffered in his persistent determination to do what he believed to be right.

In connection with the beginnings of his temperance work, we come upon the first manifestation of one of his most remarkable qualities, and one which went far to account for the peculiar character and success of his subsequent course. Above all ordinary workmen, those take highest rank of excellence who, finding no fit implements provided for them, make their own tools. These refuse to acknowledge the bounds of possibility within which ordinary men allow themselves to be confined, and patiently, out of their own original resources, work out new means to accomplish new ends. The illustration now given may seem to be very trivial, but, looked at in relation to many following acts and events, it is full of interest and importance. It was necessary that the temperance meetings should be announced; but the resources of the little society were too slender to allow of expenditure upon the ordinary methods

of advertising, and the young clerk's income was too small, after its liberal reduction for religious and charitable purposes, to enable him to meet the difficulty of money cost. So he himself prepared large bills for posting. His father collected for him during the day from various shops, where such things are wont to be displayed, bills that had served their original purpose; and these the son, when his day's office work was over, cut to pieces, and arranged the letters, for the use of his own announcements, upon large sheets of paper; and thus he produced, by his singular neatness and skill, some most striking and attractive "posters."

In the year 1838, some of those who were actively working for the benefit of the children and young people conceived the idea that amongst these a much larger amount might be gathered for the Missionary Society than had yet been raised: a scheme was accordingly framed by Mr. Smithies and a dear friend of his for enlisting all this youthful vigour in the good service; and it was determined that the collecting by means of missionary-boxes should be specially promoted. Into the

working of this project Mr. Smithies entered most heartily, and for years took a foremost part in helping and managing the important movement into which it grew. The result of the first year's effort was a total of £15 18*s*. Delighted and encouraged by their success, the promoters of the enterprise pushed it forward with fresh energy; and the next year it produced £30 4*s*. Here again the best tools for the work were not at hand; and again our friend was ready for the emergency. Illustrated cards, a thing hitherto almost unknown, were prepared and distributed among the young collectors. Then the old missionary-boxes were clumsy, and altogether unattractive. So Mr. Smithies designed a new box, neat and ornamental, the pattern of which was adopted by the Missionary Society, and the uncomely boxes of old days passed out of use.

Of the particular work just described it may be stated that its success advanced year by year. Last year the sum raised in this way reached £295; and since the beginning in 1838 an amount has been thus contributed to the Wesleyan Missionary Society of more than £6,500, and this

without interfering with other sources of income.

There is always a large and comfortable class of good people who find great peace in believing that things will do very well as they are. To such young T. B. Smithies must have been the cause of much unwelcome disturbance. For all their admiration of him—and one could not help loving him—they could not but resent the persistent way in which he declared his dissatisfaction with means and methods, in the use of which others had learned to be content. When he once saw how things might be done better, he gave himself no rest until the improvement was, at least, earnestly attempted, even though he had to act alone outside the lines within which the activity of the Church had come to limit itself.

Out of that troublesome dissatisfaction of his, what a wealth of good results has grown! He refused, for instance, to be content with the style of literature then provided for children, and especially with the unpleasing forms in which it was published. He fretted at the dull drudgery of the elementary teaching as then practised; and it was to him a day of delight when he saw the little

ones using, with excited interest, a box of letters, instead of standing in joyless apathy before an alphabet board. He was most zealous in the use of tracts; but his soul mourned over the unwinning way in which they were "got up." Even when something which called itself a pictorial illustration was supplied, it was most miserably executed, and often ridiculous or repulsive. He had already come to have great faith in pictures for popular teaching, and was always on the look-out for such rare specimens as were then issued from the press at a cheap rate, but still never satisfied; ever longing for something better, and wondering much how it might be secured. There is something of uncommon interest in watching this troubled desire which, as the years went on strengthened into purpose, and at last grew into abundant fruitfulness of action.

In his Sunday-school work his whole heart, with all its loving fervour, was engaged. He could not content himself with dealing with the children in the school. He found them out in their homes, in many of which his visit was the beginning of better days. At one time he could not get rid of the impression that it would be well to go and

look after some of the absentee scholars during the hours of public service. Acting upon this conviction, he found that he had put himself into collision with the opinions of many good people, who could not understand how anything could justify his absence from the house of God at the appointed time of worship. Their censures pained him; but were not able to shake his belief that he was doing right in denying himself, that he might go and seek the unfolded wanderers. Those Sunday explorations did a great deal towards fixing the character of his future course. He found himself an intruder upon a practically undisturbed domain of evil; and its revelations of domestic vice and misery appalled him. Then he first came face to face with the widespread desecration of the Lord's Day, and all its fruitful mischief, and felt himself driven to take up that uncompromising position in regard to the Sabbath law from which he never departed.

At a certain meeting of Sunday-school teachers, a very anxious deliberation was held about the bad conduct of some of the elder boys; and, as all gentler means had so far proved in vain, it was urged that, for

the sake of the school, these boys must be expelled. Mr. Smithies then rose to argue against this extreme measure, and pleaded earnestly for mercy. To enforce this plea, he read the following narrative, which is well worth repeating here.

"A boy in a Wesleyan Sunday-school had become so incorrigible that it was found necessary to expel him, lest his bad conduct should corrupt the rest. On the following Sabbath the parents of this boy brought him again to the school, and begged the superintendent to readmit him, telling him that this was their only hope, that by being at the Sunday-school he might be brought to reflect on his bad conduct. The superintendent, however, felt obliged to object, yet was very sorry to do so when he saw the distress of the parents. He then said that he would take him again if they would become sureties for his good conduct. But this they durst not do. He then adopted the following plan, hoping to benefit the rest of the school. He took the outcast by the hand, led him into the school, and called for silence. He said, 'Boys, you all know that this boy was expelled on account of his bad conduct. His parents have brought him

to-day to have him again admitted; but to this I cannot consent unless someone will become surety, and answer for his future good conduct. Is there any one among you who will become surety for him?' A solemn silence for some moments ensued; when a voice from the lower end of the school was heard, which said, 'I will, sir.' 'You will?' said the superintendent. 'Who are you? Come here, and let me look at you.' A little boy then got up. Now, this little boy was so poor as regards this world's goods, that he was known in the school by the name of 'Ragged Tom.' He was asked if he was willing to become surety for the boy, when he softly said, 'Yes.' He was then asked if he knew the meaning of being surety for another, when he replied, 'Yes; if he does anything wrong, I must be punished for him.' 'And are you then willing to be thus punished?' 'Yes, if he may be again admitted.' The little ragged boy then took his purchased friend by the hand and led him to his seat. On the school leaving, the superintendent observed that Tom still stuck close to the boy. He resolved to follow them home, and waited a little behind until they

arrived at Tom's house, and went in. Then he followed. On his knocking at the door, Tom's mother came, and in reply to his inquiry said that Tom and one of his schoolfellows had gone upstairs. Asking leave, he went up after them; and when he got to the room door, he heard Tom praying for the boy, and saying, 'O Lord, do Thou make this boy, from being the worst boy in the school, O, do Thou make him the best boy in the school!' Then he could keep outside no longer, but went in, and prayed with them; and their prayers were heard and answered in the conversion of this boy. He afterwards became a very useful member in the Church, and a blessing to the parents, whose hearts he had so often grieved. He was soon made a teacher in the school, and afterwards became a prayer-leader, then a class-leader; and so on, step by step, until he was sent out as a missionary. In the first letter he wrote home he desired that 'Ragged Tom,' who was then a local preacher, might be sent to him, in order that he might 'become surety' for some of the poor Africans."

Among the very scanty records of his own doings, which have been preserved, we are

fortunate in finding some notes, which exhibit very instructively Mr. Smithies' principles and methods of working. On one Sunday afternoon, he had left the Sunday-school, in order to search for some boys whom he had found, the Sunday before, wandering about uncared for and untaught. In the course of his inquiry he was directed to a yard in one of the low parts of the city. Here follows his own account:—

"As we entered the gateway of the yard, the first sight that met our eyes was three boys playing at marbles. Two of them were brothers, and were decently clad, and had on tolerably clean smocks; the third was a very dirty and ragged but interesting-looking lad. I immediately accosted them with, 'Holloa! my lads. What, playing at marbles on Sunday! Don't you know that you are breaking the Sabbath? Don't you know that it is very wrong, and that God will be very angry with you?' I then inquired if they went to any Sunday-school, and found that none of them did; and that the ragged lad did not know his letters. I thought of the account of 'Ragged Tom,' and felt an interest in the one now before me. I asked if he would like to learn his letters, and

to learn to read. He said, 'Yes.' 'Well, then,' taking him by the hand, 'come with me to the Sunday-school, and I'll teach you.' The lad shrank back, and seemed to look upon his rags, as though he were ashamed to go. I then invited the two other boys, who declined; although I thought they seemed half inclined to go. I felt, however, the greater interest in the ragged lad, and turned to him again, and said, 'Come, now, I want you to go with me. Where do your father and mother live?' The lad did not seem very willing to go with me; but as one of the other boys pointed to a door at the top of the yard, I took the little chap by the hand, and led him to the door. A woman answered to the tap. I entered the room, and found the father reading one of the Salem Chapel tracts, and a boy about fourteen seated before the fire. The room was very neat and clean; and I was surprised at the contrast between it and the lad. The following conversation then took place:

"'I find that your little boy cannot read; and I want him to go to the Sunday-school, and we'll try to teach him.' 'Why, sir, we should like him to learn; but he hasn't any

clothes fit to go in.' 'If you can get him any better clothes, of course we should like it better; but if you can't, we had rather he came to school as he is than not come at all.' 'I think, sir, perhaps I could manage to get him a better jacket before next Sunday; and if I can, he shall come.' 'Very well, then, I shall expect to see him, and shall look after him. Does he know where the school is?' 'Not exactly, sir.'"

An arrangement having been made for one of the scholars to call for him, Mr. Smithies retired. "Leaving the house," he says, "I returned down the yard, and found a party of six or seven lads, and an old woman, in the gateway, apparently wonderfully interested in what I was after. On my approaching them, one lad, more ready than the rest, called out, 'Here's a lad 'at 'll go.' I looked amongst them and saw one whose face I thought I knew. I inquired if he had ever been in Wesley Place Sunday-school, and he replied, 'Yes. I left about four years ago.' 'Well, will you come back again?' 'I will next Sunday.' 'Nay, come with me to-day.' 'Why, I will if that lad 'll go.' And he pointed to a bigger boy, who was but poorly clothed, and was eating away at a

good-sized crust of bread. I then turned to my new acquaintance, and invited him to go. 'I have t' asses to mind,' said he. 'O, the asses will do without you to-day. Come, come along!' After pausing for a moment or two, he very resolutely took his crust of bread, and thrust it into his side pocket, saying, 'Why, there, I'll go.' Having got these two so far into the mind, I then accosted the two in the white smocks, and they consented to accompany us. We all then proceeded to the school, some of the neighbours looking at the party with wonder and curiosity: but I feel satisfied that their astonishment was not equal to my pleasure. On our entering the school, many of the teachers and scholars also seemed to wonder what was the matter. I tried how they could read, and found that the biggest lad—the one with the crust of bread—was the worst. I planted them in different classes, and requested the teachers to take a special interest in them, and to speak kindly to them. When the school was leaving, I spoke to each of them, and said I hoped they would find their way to the school next Sunday; and they all stated their desire so to do. May the Lord incline their hearts to come."

The next Sunday's entry is :—"It was with no small degree of pleasure that I found all the four lads last mentioned, together with the ragged lad, who was now more decently dressed, had been at the school this morning, and that they had brought a sixth boy, one of their companions, with them."

No narrative could be simpler than this. But is it not well worth preserving? Who can tell the importance to those young lives of the good man's researches on that Sunday afternoon? Does not the reflection naturally suggest itself, that immeasurable good is possible where there are devoted workers, ready to deny themselves, and render a plain, steady, unromantic service of Christian love?

The year 1840 became a marked date in Mr. Smithies' history, as in that of hundreds beside, by reason of the appointment of the late Rev. John Rattenbury to the York Circuit. This most successful preacher of the Gospel was then in the prime of his strength and full tide of his usefulness; and sacred traditions are treasured in York, as elsewhere, of the wonderful scenes which were witnessed in connection

with his ministry. Thus, on a New Year's Sunday, in New Street Chapel, ninety persons repented and believed to the saving of their souls. Mr. Smithies was at this as at many other such services, rejoicing in the tokens of God's gracious power, and devoting himself with untiring diligence to the welcome work of leading seekers to Christ; and, if necessary, following them to their own homes, and visiting them again and again with faithful solicitude.

Three years later, the Rev. Nehemiah Curnock was stationed in York, and under his influence every good work in which Mr. Smithies was engaged acquired fresh impetus, and was developed into larger usefulness. Mr. Curnock's strongly-marked sympathy with children, and the remarkable fascination he exercised over them in his addresses, gave new life to the already vigorous Sunday-school service of York Methodism. He also introduced to the committees and teachers new methods and appliances of school management, which were gladly welcomed and zealously adopted, and by no one more eagerly than by T. B. Smithies, between whom and Mr. Curnock a very close, warm friendship was soon

established. The Juvenile Missionary enterprise also profited greatly by Mr. Curnock's coming. He assiduously gathered together strange costumes, hideous idols, weapons of war, and other wondrously attractive objects from different Mission-stations; and by the exhibition of these, accompanied by his own animated comments, excited an interest which greatly helped forward the work.

All this was exactly after Mr. Smithies' own heart, and served to give definite form to thoughts and wishes which had long been working in his mind. Many years after, he said to Mr. Curnock's son: "Your father taught me a lesson which, if you will allow me, I should like to impress upon his son. He used to say, 'If you want children, and even grown-up people, to remember what you say,—show them something.'" Thenceforward, the idea of teaching, made attractive and telling by graphic illustration, gained more and more mastery over his thinking and planning, and awakened undefined hopes of possibilities which seemed then not only very far off, but little likely to be fulfilled. In connection with the new children's meetings, there was originated the expedient of preparing great maps

which, by startling contrasts of colour, showed at a glance how religious light and darkness divided the world. In the making of these maps, assisted by Mr. Curnock and Mr. Tabor, of York, our friend found congenial employment.

Let us try to recall the T. B. Smithies of those days. He has just passed his twenty-seventh year. He is under the middle height. Brisk of step, animated in speech, with a face beaming with good feeling and good humour, and eyes, beneath large eyebrows, glowing with mingled tenderness and vigilance, ready to sparkle into innocent mirth, or to weep with them that weep—he charms you into admiration and trust before you have been half an hour in his company. He takes the children captive without a show of resistance on their part, or even reluctance. Seated on his knee, they willingly yield to the spell of his bright, loving sympathy, and are made glad by the little book, or card, or leaflet, *always with a picture*, which his pockets never fail to supply. If you believe Lavater, that "A man's dress is the table of his contents," you will say that this young man is orderly,

systematic, and punctual. Indeed, among those who look at him from a distance, he sometimes is suspected of a little ostentation, and not a little extravagance in this matter of dress.

A very good story is told of him at a rather earlier period, which illustrates more than one point in his character. A man said to one of Mr. Smithies' most cherished friends: "I wonder how ever you can bear to have such a conceited youth as your companion." This criticism was, of course, jestingly reported to the subject of it, who said, after a while: "John, I will put a coal of fire on his head." He ascertained that the man was a working bookbinder, and forthwith went amongst his friends, and got together some fifty volumes, which needed to be bound or repaired. These were put into a clothes-basket, and, by the help of his friend, carried upstairs in a house in one of the narrow streets of the city, where the bookbinder lived and worked. Outside the door his friend left him. Next day he called to see the man, who exclaimed: "Look here. Mr. Smithies has brought me all these books to be bound. I had no idea he was a youth like that!"

It is needless to say that thenceforward there was another added to the number of Mr. Smithies' grateful admirers.

It was really his particular neatness that gave people the idea that he bestowed too much thought and money on his dress. To a friend who had half charged him with this, he with perfect good nature proposed that they should compare accounts, when it was found that in this item he was spending much less than his friend.

If you inquire in York about young Thomas Bywater Smithies, you will find that his time, outside of office hours, is filled up with diligent work in many good things. Talk to him about these, especially about the Sunday-school, or the temperance cause, or the instances of conversion last Sunday, and he kindles forthwith into warm enthusiasm. You soon find, too, that his knowledge of Scripture is extensive and ready to use, and that he spends many an hour in Bible study; that he has learned short-hand, and accustoms himself to report sermons at great length, and with much exactness; and that prayer seems to be to him the most natural and most welcome

of all engagements. There are those who think that so devoted a Christian should be set apart for the ministry; and they have urged upon the Rev. N. Curnock that he should take steps in this direction. To them Mr. Curnock, with better wisdom and sagacious forethought, makes answer decisively: "No. You would, no doubt, make a good minister; but you would spoil a splendid layman." He does indeed preach a few times, but soon discovers that his call to serve is not there, and gives himself entirely to other work.

In 1845, the Rev. James Caughey conducted a series of services in York with very large success. Into these Mr. Smithies threw all his energies, and acted as secretary to the organization which was formed for the purpose of registering and looking after the large number of persons who, in connection with these services, declared themselves to be seeking, or to have found, salvation. His admiration of Mr. Caughey and approval of his methods were not unqualified; yet, in a way which was thoroughly characteristic of him throughout life, for the sake of the good in which he rejoiced,

he lent all his strength and influence to the work, although some features of it were not according to his own mind. One thing, wherein Mr. Smithies heartily concurred, the American Evangelist always made very prominent in his preaching: he insisted upon it that, whenever it was possible, restitution was essential to genuine repentance. Within some three or four weeks, during which Mr. Smithies recorded the names of a thousand "inquirers," several hundreds of pounds passed through his hands, paid in by those whose consciences accused them of having defrauded persons; to whom the money was thus transmitted.

During these services the Friday evenings were specially devoted to the subject of holiness; and on one such occasion Mr. Smithies was found among those who declared themselves to be seeking entire sanctification. For three hours he remained in intense earnestness of pleading. As he went home afterwards, accompanied by a young friend who greatly loved and admired him, his companion said to him in some surprise: "I always regarded you as a holy man, if ever there was one; and I was a little astonished to find you

amongst the seekers." His reply was: "James, nobody knows the evil of my heart like myself. Besides, I find it won't do to try to grow into a clean heart. It needs a definite transaction, and I felt that it came to a *must be* to-night."

That which has been already said concerning Mr. Smithies' Sunday-school work will have made it plain, that his zeal could not be restricted in its action within the ordinary limits. He saw that below the level from which the scholars generally came, there were great numbers of neglected children for whom the ordinary methods did not provide—children whose presence in the schools would, by reason of their extreme poverty, be little less than an embarrassment. On behalf of these he pleaded again and again in Teachers' Meetings and before the General Committee; and in 1845 a paragraph was, by his influence, inserted in the Annual Report, calling attention to this great need. Early in 1847, he put the matter again before a large meeting of teachers, describing vividly the sad discoveries which he had made in the course of his own explorations; and

so effectual was his warm pleading on behalf of the neglected children, that it was determined that steps should be forth with taken to provide special means for gathering and teaching them. Thus, through his untiring advocacy, a new undertaking began, and the first Ragged-school was established in York, in Bedern, near the spot where, before any Methodist chapel existed in the city, John Wesley had preached. A room was hired and fitted up for the purpose, in February, 1847; and before long one hundred and ten poor children were in attendance, under the care of such teachers of the Wesley Place Sunday-school as could be spared from their other work.

This Ragged-school was afterwards continued under the devoted management of the late Mr. J. W. Locking, whose death in the midst of his great usefulness brought sorrow to many, and to none more sincere than to the children who followed him to the grave with many tears. After this the school passed into other hands, and underwent considerable change and development, until, at last, it grew into the great institution now known as *The York Industrial School.*

About this time, Mr. Smithies took up another work, with which his name afterwards was to be associated throughout the land. At a meeting in his own house, there was organized the first Band of Hope in York. The more he worked amongst the poor, and in the haunts and homes of artisans and labourers, the more the evidence crowded upon him of the moral and social havoc which was being wrought by intemperance. He saw, too, that the evil was by no means limited to these classes. The whole question of the social drinking customs of all grades of the people deeply and painfully excited his interest; and time after time, in families which he knew well, he watched the fatal history of indulgence unfolding itself in sorrow and ruin and death. He, with his fellow-reformers, recognised that the tyrannous power of custom was too much for them, and that the hope of better things must be secured in training a generation who should grow up in separation from the cause of the mischief. How splendidly, in the course of thirty-six years, has the wisdom of this policy been justified!

For many years the Prayer-leaders had

held weekly meetings at York Castle, in what was called "the King's Prison," where debtors and persons committed for contempt of court were confined. Mr. Smithies was not content with this limitation, and got liberty to visit the prisoners in all parts of the Castle. While talking one day with seventeen young convicts in one ward, he made the startling discovery that fifteen of them had once attended Sunday-schools; and he found that most of these had not altogether forgotten what they had been taught. As he tried to lead them back to these early recollections, several of them were much moved, and said one after another: "If I had practised what my teacher taught me, all would have been well." "If I had remembered what I learned, and kept from drink, I should not have been here." "I had a good teacher, but the public-house has been my ruin." "I should not have been here if I had kept from drink." "I durst not have done what I did if I had not taken some drink." "Drinking and gambling have brought me here. My mother's heart is broken."

A closer inquiry was made into the history of these fifteen young prisoners, and

it was discovered that ten of them, who were about to be transported, had committed crimes whilst under the influence of drink. The others had been led indirectly into evil courses, either by their own intemperance, or the drinking habits of their parents. Once upon this track, Mr. Smithies followed it up thoroughly, and found that in another ward, out of fourteen prisoners, thirteen had been Sunday-scholars; in another, out of eleven, nine; in another, ten out of thirteen; and two of these had once been teachers. Running through most of these cases was the terrible story of drink, with its attendant evils. Again and again Mr. Smithies questioned the prisoners, "Were you never warned at the Sunday-school against drinking?" "Did your teacher, amongst other good advice, never urge you to abstain from those drinks which have proved your ruin?" "No, sir," was the invariable reply. The first result of these inquiries was that Mr. Smithies took himself to task, with much self-reproach, concerning that which now seemed to him to be an imperative duty. "On the cold flags in one of the cells in York Castle," he says, "I was constrained from what I there saw

and heard, to make a solemn mental promise that no child should, from that time, pass under my oversight as a teacher without my advising the adoption of entire abstinence from the use of strong drink; so that, in the event of any of my scholars ever becoming drunkards or criminals through drinking, they might not be able to say, 'My teacher never warned me against that evil which has led to my ruin.'"

But the subject had taken too deep a hold upon him for him to let it drop at this point. He set himself to work to correspond with the chaplains of the principal prisons, and the managers of penitentiaries in England, Scotland, and Wales. The returns thus obtained showed that, out of ten thousand three hundred and sixty-one persons then in these places, not fewer than six thousand five hundred and seventy-two had been Sunday-scholars! Allowing that many of these had, no doubt, been in a school for only a short time, he took the returns from the Wakefield House of Correction as yielding a fair average. These showed that at least one-half of the inmates of our prisons and penitentiaries had attended a Sunday-school for upwards of three years.

Although such inquiries have been made more extensively since, yet this is worthy of note as the original action of a man whose godly zeal set out alone to explore, for Christ's sake, a dark and unknown region. The sequel of this passage in Mr. Smithies' work, though belonging to a somewhat later period, may be told here. He could not bear to carry the burden of the painful knowledge which he had acquired, and therefore, in the year 1850, published a small pamphlet giving the history of his inquiry and its results, and affirming that all these alarming facts went to prove the necessity of warning the children in Sunday-schools of the dangers of intemperance, and of advising them to keep, by entire abstinence, wholly out of their reach. Such doctrine set forth now would awaken no surprise, and meet with no opposition. But things were very different then. A very strong assertion connected with this subject, made by Mr. Finney in Tottenham Court Road Chapel, London, exploded amongst the Sunday-school workers, to their great indignation: and the authority for this assertion was traced to Mr. Smithies, who was hotly accused of many

evil things. One critic, in an important religious periodical, charged his statistics with falsehood, and accused him of being guilty of little less than blasphemy, in having declared that the Gospel was not enough in itself for the salvation of the children. It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Smithies neither said nor thought anything of the kind. But in this temperance question he had then the tide against him, as he very often found to his great distress. So high ran the feeling of resentment at his way of putting unwelcome facts and arguing from them, that he was hissed at a great meeting in Exeter Hall. All this, to his sensitive heart, was acutely painful. But he had a solemn conviction that he was right, and quietly but firmly held on his way, waiting for the tide to turn. He did not wait in vain, but lived to see the Sunday-school work throughout the land wedded to the temperance cause.

Let us return to the brief remainder of Mr. Smithies' career in York. He had, by his faithful and devoted service, come to fill up so large a space in all manner of Christian enterprise, that, to those who

worked with him, his presence seemed almost necessary to their success. He was now about forty years of age, and had already had so long a career of active engagement in all manner of good things, that a whole generation of workers had grown up to regard him as their leader and pattern. He had a large Society-class of young men, including most of the teachers of junior classes in the Wesley Place Sunday-school. Over the members of this Class he watched with jealous care, seeking to lead them into fuller experience of spiritual religion, always in order to their greater usefulness. While they listened to his earnest counsels, they had before them continually the stimulating example of his own unselfish devotion and unsparing labour. Young men grew up from that Class into positions of Christian office and responsibility; and there are not a few now living, in this and other lands, who gratefully acknowledge the debt they owe to their much-loved and revered Leader, Mr. Smithies. It would be easy here to quote the several testimonies of these; but all their witness, differently expressed, may be gathered into this one thankful record,—that his Christian life was beautiful in its

bright, cheerful simplicity and sincere consistency; that, while holding strong and definite opinions, on which he faithfully acted, he was never known, by word or temper or act, to transgress the law of love; that he seemed to live in an atmosphere of prayer, and brought with him into everything the savour of communion with God.

This is no over-drawn picture of a biographer's ideal. Such evidence as this, from those who knew him intimately in the days of which we now write, might have many additions. Thus one—perhaps his most cherished friend—writes: "He was a grand man. Many possessed talents which would have put my good friend in the shade; but, comparing results, his efforts and his work will live, whilst many of these men of talent will pass away unheeded and forgotten. He lived for others, not for himself. What he did, he did well; no trace of the idle, the careless, or the slovenly was ever found in him."

Another writes: "During the whole course of my knowledge of him I can say with confidence what I could say of no other living person, that I never knew or heard of any word or action of his which his

best or nearest friends could regret. Faults of temper I never saw or heard of in him; and he is the brightest example that I know of human nature renewed and sanctified by the Divine Spirit."

Mr. Smithies was unencumbered with family cares; for he remained unmarried, and lived in his father's house. All his time, therefore, when not occupied in business, was free to be used in religious and philanthropic work, and was all thus devoted. In business, his exactness, his perfect trustworthiness, and his uniformly cheerful, gentlemanly demeanour, gained for him high favour in the office where he was employed, and amongst its clients. Thus he had risen, and had before him the fairest prospect of still further promotion.

In the early part of 1849 it became known that Mr. Smithies had been solicited to take a position of important trust in London. To his friends and fellow-workers in York, it was as clear as daylight that his duty was to stay where he was; and they contemplated with dismay the vacancy which would be caused in important offices by his removal. Much as his services had been always valued, it was now seen for

the first time how large a space was covered by his work, and how well. No wonder, then, that he became painfully embarrassed, in the loving tenderness of his nature, by the entreaties, expostulations, and forebodings of his friends, and especially by the evident grief which the thought of his departure caused in the happy home where his presence was prized most of all.

Nothing but a very distinct conviction, becoming more and more definite as he sought counsel of God and obediently gave himself up to His disposal, would have made it possible for Mr. Smithies to endure the suffering of opposing the advice and remonstrances of those he loved the best, and of severing himself from work which had become as dear to him as his own life. But he believed that he was called to higher and more difficult service, in new directions, and demanding the larger advantages which could be secured only by a residence in the metropolis. What the further work was to be, he had not as yet seen; but he felt that the past years had been years of preparation for something more. During all those years, one distinguishing feature of his character, already noted here, had never lost its marked

prominence. Whenever he saw that there was a possibility, however remote, of things being better, he refused to be satisfied with them as they were. Not that he foolishly withheld from doing any duty because it could, at the time, be done only imperfectly. He did his best up to the point of present ability. When he saw an improvement within reach, he gave himself, and other people too, no rest until it was secured. But many of his unsatisfied longings remained unfulfilled. He longed to get a hearing from a larger public for the thoughts of holy and loving enterprise which burned in his own soul. He longed to persuade others that new plans and a new machinery were needed for doing good which most urgently needed to be done. He longed to carry the war of Christian philanthropy into hitherto unassailed strongholds of darkness; and, looking wistfully at these things, he longed, with but faintest hope, that he might some day be able to show the way to the accomplishment of that which ought to be done.

So Mr. Smithies went to London, and entered upon his new duties as managing secretary of the Gutta-percha Company,

whereby he was brought into very intimate relations with some of the most prominent members of the Society of Friends, and formed close and warm attachments among them which were never interrupted. These attachments were the result not only of mutual regard and confidence, but still more of association in all manner of good works. He found himself connected with men and women of wealth and influence, but of simple piety, and fervent zeal in the promotion of all things charitable and righteous, and showing a lively and practical sympathy with his own efforts and aspirations. The cordial co-operation he met with in this direction was a very welcome set-off against the depressing feeling which multitudes beside him have experienced in coming to live in the great world of London. From being known by everybody, and feeling himself surrounded on all hands by kindly companionship in his social and religious life, he painfully suffered from the sudden chill of finding himself personally unrecognised and unknown, lonely in the vast busy crowd in which he seemed to be lost. To how many has that crisis of change proved a

fatal period of unfaithfulness! Loosened suddenly from long accustomed helps and ties, they have drifted into worldliness and evil. The distress of change did not injure Mr. Smithies' spiritual life and devotion; and it did him one most valuable service. He had been always ready to give ungrudging acknowledgment to the good that was going on outside his own Church bounds: now this acknowledgment was led into a more practical form, as he found ready fellowship and aid in many who, while conscientiously guarding their Church principles, made everything subordinate to practical union in the common enterprise against sin and misery. From that time forward, he stood side by side with earnest men and women, who, in their solemn sense of the greatness and the urgency of the work before them, never stopped to ask each other to what portion of the one Church they belonged.

He himself remained as loyal and earnest a Methodist as ever, and soon got to work in the ways he loved the best. After he had become settled in London, he proceeded to accomplish a long-cherished wish, by making his house the family home, in

which his parents should spend their last days in all the comfort that love could devise. As far as his beloved father was concerned, this long-looked-for joy was not fulfilled. He was then in very feeble health, and every arrangement had been made for his travelling with the least possible inconvenience. He still resided in York, where for many years he had enjoyed the respect and esteem of a large number of friends. The preparations for the journey to London were complete; but on the very morning when he was to have started, he passed away to his eternal home. In a short time afterwards the venerable, and now widowed, mother came to live with her son, who remained unmarried; and for some years the light of her beautiful old age gladdened his home, where she took an active interest in all his manifold works of Christian service.

We have now reached the time when we are to watch Mr. Smithies taking his first steps in a course which was to lead to perhaps his most important, and certainly to his most widely-known, success. Amongst the dissatisfactions which disturbed him most, he had felt for many years that the

popular literature sent forth in the cause of righteousness and temperance failed through unattractiveness. He regarded with intense interest the growing movement in favour of extending education among the people, and never failed to lend it all the aid in his power. But he saw that, with the spreading ability to read, it was becoming more and more urgently necessary that the supply of healthy reading material should be enlarged and improved. One thing he maintained with admirable obstinacy: the people must have pictures, and the pictures must be good. He well understood the position which he thus took; for he knew what the people were, and what they liked. He knew it not by hearsay, but by going amongst them, and making them feel that they might talk freely to him. When he spoke of the better cheap illustrations that were needed, people asked him where he was to get them; and so thought they had closed the matter. He never thought so. He was perpetually on the look out for anything which was published that would suit his purpose; and when he found it, he forthwith went on to experiment with it, and every experiment confirmed his conviction

as to what was needed. He would not believe that the thing was impossible; and the desire grew stronger and more restless within him for the coming of a time when he should be able to prove this by his own effort.

The reading of Mrs. Clara Balfour's *Morning Dewdrops* was the occasion of this desire strengthening into a definite purpose. Here he found the whole Temperance question treated plainly and intelligently, and with a careful marshalling of facts, and all done in a style well suited for the young readers for whom the book was written. He felt the importance of this book being widely circulated, and was convinced that this result was hindered by the lack of illustrations. He then determined in his own mind that, as soon as he had a hundred pounds at his own free disposal, he would cause to be published a well-illustrated edition of *Morning Dewdrops*. This purpose he afterwards fulfilled.

The thoughts which had long been working in his mind as to an improved style of popular religious periodicals, took practical form at last after Mr. Smithies had become

settled in London; and his first step was in furtherance of the work of promoting Temperance principles among young people. In January, 1851, he sent forth the first number of the *Band of Hope Review*. The matter consisted of short, bright, and attractive articles, with many small wood-cut illustrations, some of which were fairly good as contrasted with other things of the same kind at that period. They were the best that he could then command; but, as subsequent issues proved, far below his ideal standard. The fact was that now, as in his earlier days, he not only set himself to do new work, but found himself compelled to make his own tools. For the demand which he set up there was no available supply, and he was obliged to pick up where he could many of the engraved blocks for his illustrations. Gradually he obtained the help of the best artists, and the pictures in the new journal slowly and steadily advanced in excellence. Thus in the course of a very few years the *Band of Hope Review* had achieved a great success, and was welcomed into many thousands of homes.

Then followed at intervals the publication of divers tracts and small books, all of

which were more or less embellished with pictorial illustrations, and showed by their extensive circulation that their editor had discovered a real want, and hit upon the right way of meeting it.

The success of the *Band of Hope Review* encouraged Mr. Smithies to carry out a long-cherished wish to attempt the same sort of work for men and women which he was doing for the children. He knew well, by long personal acquaintance, the lives and homes, the circumstances and the temptations, of the poor, and of working people. His heart was set upon bringing the truth to the knowledge of these in a way that would win their attention and interest. At last he saw his way through the difficulties which beset this more formidable undertaking; and in 1855 he launched the *British Workman*. This enterprise also, by the rapidity of its success, justified the wisdom which had planned it, and the boldness and vigour with which it was carried out. Here again there was to be seen a continued advance in the style of the illustrations, which soon made for themselves a peculiar renown; and the large whole-page pictures upon the front of both periodicals not only carried

delight and knowledge into many humble homes, but excited the admiration of critics who had but little sympathy with the objects for which they were sent forth. These papers were circulated all over the world; and, as time went on, the editor's heart was made glad by thankful testimonies to their usefulness reaching him, again and again, from far-off lands. Several special numbers were prepared and published in the Spanish language.

It would be very easy to gather abundant evidence of the good done by the elevating and enlightening influence of Mr. Smithies' periodicals. Here is one narrative which filled his own heart with great joy. The Rev. Nehemiah Curnock, who, as a boy, when his father was Superintendent Minister in York, knew and loved Mr. Smithies, thus tells the story :—

"When I was acting as Chaplain to the Wesleyan troops in Aldershot, some years ago, a soldier, whom I knew as a true Christian, told me that when Dr. Kirton's story, *Buy your Own Cherries*, appeared in the *British Workman*, he was sitting one day on the edge of his bed in the barrack-room reading the number. His next

neighbour, seeing him absorbed in the story, and attracted, no doubt, by the fine, bold illustration which accompanied it, asked if he too might read the tale. From one borrower it passed to another, and another. From that room it went to a second and a third, until the whole battalion had read it. Ultimately the man, to whom I am indebted for the incident, handed the paper, torn and greasy, to me; and, if I remember rightly, I gave it, as a kind of trophy, to Mr. Smithies. The result will scarcely be credited save by those who know the gregariousness of British soldiers. But my informant assured me that the whole regiment, with hardly an exception, signed the pledge."

Mr. Smithies' literary work went on without interruption almost to the day of his death. For a time, he contrived to get it into the hours which were not occupied by business; but he soon found that it was impossible to do both thoroughly, and therefore gave himself up entirely to the preparation of his periodicals, books, and tracts, together with the ever-extending service of all kinds of religious and philanthropic effort. Thus, in the twenty-four years following the start

of the *British Workman*, he brought out and successfully worked the *Children's Friend*, the *Infant's Magazine*, the *Friendly Visitor*, the *Family Friend*, the *Weekly Welcome*, and the *Band of Mercy Advocate*. Beside these, he published many small books, and a vast number of tracts, and finally the exquisitely got-up little tracts known as the *Earlham Series*. In addition to all these, he sent forth in large numbers decorated texts of Scripture, illustrated handbills, almanacs, and wall-papers in different languages.

When once he had proved that it was possible, as a commercial enterprise, to provide cheap religious literature which was, at the same time, illustrated by engravings of first-rate artistic quality, there were many ready to follow in the way which he had opened. But to Mr. Smithies must ever belong the credit of having boldly faced the difficulty and the risk of the first experiment, and of having demonstrated that the excellence of the provision, however costly, was the real secret of success.

It now remains to take a glance—it can

be but a glance—at the wonderful variety of work done by Mr. Smithies after his removal to London, in addition to his constantly-growing occupation as an editor; for he did not himself go into the trade of publishing.

To all means of spreading Christian truth he was ever ready to lend his earnest help; but those means gained his heartiest support and co-operation which were devised for the purpose of breaking up neglected ground, and carrying the benefits of the Gospel to those who had been practically forgotten by the ordinary Church agencies—whole classes of people who had become socially outcast, driven forth, largely by their own evil, into a terrible wilderness of exclusion from all that was good and bright and kindly in life, and thus shut up in circumstances which compelled them to a yet deeper degradation. True to his earliest methods, Mr. Smithies sought to meet the portentous difficulties which were thus presented by beginning with the children; and the zeal which had led to the setting up of the first Ragged-school in York, was now devoted to the aid of similar efforts in London. But the very

endeavour to rescue the children brought him, as in former years, into the appalling knowledge of their life-history and its dreadful conditions. Somewhere in every woeful story of wretchedness and crime, as he tracked it out with aching heart, he came upon the omnipresent curse wrought by drunkenness, and, day by day, found the conviction forced upon him more irresistibly, that the only effectual way of meeting the dire extremity of mischief must itself be radical and extreme. All through his course, therefore, he was the ardent advocate and promoter of that temperance which, by entire abstinence, makes intemperance impossible.

But Mr. Smithies had no kindred with those—if such there be—who would drill and scold erring men and women into better ways. He approached them with the most irresistible of all methods, which cannot be learned or copied, but must be the natural outcome of a tenderly sympathizing heart. While he reproved sin, he set himself to the active relief of its dark consequences, and to the help of those who had given up hoping that they could ever be freed from its toils. He saw, for in-

stance, how terribly hard was the upward path for those who had, by a too easy descent, lapsed into a life of crime, and had grown used to the indelible brand of infamy which marked them off from a share in the commonest claims and benefits of decent human society. It was very seldom that he was without some cases on his hands of those who were struggling to right themselves again; and to be on his hands meant to have his most practical and ungrudging help. It was a great burden upon his mind during the very last days of his life, that no more effectual means existed for providing shelter and aid for released prisoners, to enable them to get back to honest work and virtue.

Once, in conversation with the late venerable City Missionary, Mr. Thomas Jackson, he started the bold idea of having a meeting of thieves. So bold a venture was then unheard of, though often repeated since; but Mr. Jackson, who was well known and trusted by a large number of these men, undertook to invite the guests. About ninety gathered to enjoy a good tea which Mr. Smithies had provided. They came on the distinct assurance that no detec-

tive should be present, and that they should be dismissed in time to go about their customary and evil business. Several of them, as it was afterwards discovered, brought with them in their pockets burglars' tools. The tea was evidently well appreciated. Afterwards the guests were asked to listen to the reading of Scripture, and some short, kind addresses. They stayed in quiet patience, which soon deepened into interest, and many of them were moved to tears. When the fixed time for breaking up the meeting came, the men showed great unwillingness to move. Gradually it was elicited that the majority of them did not know how to get lodging for the night unless they first went out and "earned" the means. When asked if they would stay longer, and then go quietly to bed, if their lodgings were paid for, they eagerly assented; and thus this remarkable meeting was prolonged, and, in several instances, with permanently good results.

The expedient of feeding people well was one that fully commended itself to Mr. Smithies' generous soul; and he had great faith in it as a means of gaining their interest in better things. During the

terrible distress of the years 1867 and 1868, when the working people suffered the most pitiable privation through want of employment, he had full and frequent opportunities for making the experiment of this method on a large scale. The plan of holding large meetings of the sufferers on a Sunday morning, and giving them first a good breakfast, had its origin in the Christian charity of certain members of the Society of Friends, with whom Mr. Smithies had long been a hearty co-worker. There was no lack of funds to meet the necessary expense. The first great gathering of the kind took place at Millwall, when about six hundred hungry people assembled in the dining-hall of the Millwall Iron Works, and, after having been well fed, remained until one o'clock, apparently much interested in the cheerful religious service which followed. After this, many such meetings were held, in the organizing and carrying out of which Mr. Smithies took a principal part. At first he was oppressed with a fear lest the great labour involved in this new work, added to his other duties, would prove too much for his strength. On another point also he was uneasy. He could not see how

all the necessary preparations could be made without a great deal of Sunday work; and to this his strict sense of duty would not allow him to consent. In both respects, however, his misgivings proved to be groundless. The toil was great, especially as his conscience towards God would not permit him to ride in any public conveyance on a Sunday; and, how great soever the distance, he walked it all, unless he could find lodging in the neighbourhood on the Saturday: but his strength held out without failure. Then, in the way in which openings were made for the holding of the Sunday morning breakfasts, one surprise after another rewarded the faith of those who were engaged in arranging them; and persons the least likely to help so ordered matters that all preparations were complete on the Saturday night. On one occasion the proprietor of a large music-hall, who was a Jew, cheerfully lent the place for a meeting, and made everything as easy as possible for those who got things ready beforehand.

On a smaller scale, Mr. Smithies frequently repeated the device of gathering the people together for a good meal, that he and others might get them to listen to the

Gospel. In this, as in other things, he seemed to have a restless ingenuity, which could never be content with waiting for opportunities of good to come to him, but sought them out, and even made them by all manner of devices. Thus, in conversation with one who was much engaged in Christian work amongst the Jews, the thought struck him that it would be well to get a number of these to attend a meeting. His friend offered to give the invitations, which, to his surprise, were cheerfully accepted, and a considerable company assembled to enjoy a specially well-served tea. Afterwards they listened with respectful attention to kindly put statements of Christian truth. But a most unfortunate mistake was made. A converted Jew rose to speak, whereupon, with every expression of the most indignant anger, the guests refused to listen to him.

While thus his time and powers were occupied by a great variety of efforts to do good to the souls and bodies of men, Mr. Smithies' lovingkindness went still beyond. He had been taught from a child that mercy took all living creatures into its sympathy. Thus he had grown up in kind fellowship

with the animal world, and warmly entered into the designs of those who set up a high standard of duty in this direction. The happiness of bird or beast awakened ready response in his soul; and in all their manifestations of instinct and sagacity and faithfulness he took intense delight, while he made it part of his religion to guard them against hurt and ill-use. No one can even distantly estimate the blessings secured to animals, and especially to the animals which men have about their homes or employ in their work, or can tell the amount of suffering from which they have been rescued, through the earnest advocacy and unremitting effort of Mr. Smithies' admirable mother and her devoted son. Not only in our own land, but in other and far separate parts of the world, their names have become honoured with the noble fame of a large kindness, which claimed and sought the true welfare of man and beast. It was at the instigation of Mrs. Smithies that, in the *Band of Mercy*, an effort was made, and with very great success, to enlist children in the cause of kindness to animals. To promote this congenial work, Mr. Smithies did his best both by means of the press and

by personal advocacy ; and it brought most thankful joy to him in his last illness to know that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the most distinguished members of which he rejoiced to reckon amongst his friends, had resolved to take up the *Band of Mercy* into their organization.

Mr. Smithies' principles in regard to the observance of the Lord's Day were so strict and so distinctly asserted, as to demand some special notice. While he bowed to the sacred obligation of the unrepealed Sabbath law, he held that the best rules for obedience thereto were those which the Divine Lawgiver had Himself laid down. As he thus, to begin with, acknowledged the sanctity of the institution, he recognised its essential mercifulness. Hence he considered that all who were employed upon railways and other public means of conveyance on the Sunday were being defrauded of their Divinely-prescribed right ; and his conscience would not permit him to become a party to the injury. He found on conversing with many of these men that this matter was a grievous stumbling-block to

them, and that they were slow to listen to the claims of a religion whose professors, they said, made it impossible for them to avail themselves of the benefits of that public worship to which they seemed to give a great importance. He believed, too, that where God had, by a direct enactment, mercifully provided for rest to be given to the beasts, no man had a right to set the provision aside. He found that many London cabmen would gladly secure for themselves the weekly rest, but their licence made it practically impossible; and he was one of the first, if not the first, to begin the movement which resulted in the granting of six days' licences to those who wished for them. All through his course he consistently gave his whole influence in favour of every attempt to make our national legislation agree in this respect with the law of God.

Mr. Smithies' publications had the advantage of having, to a great extent, broken new ground, and his energy had made them a considerable commercial success. Had financial gain been a chief object with him, he might have very largely increased it. As his income grew, so his givings largely

increased. The consecration of a tenth to the purposes of religion and charity was a very long way from satisfying him. A great many knew that he was always ready to contribute to good ends; but no one knew how much he really gave away. His scrupulous observance of secrecy in this respect was carried, perhaps, to an extreme. That which he gave was confined to no narrow limits. He was perpetually on the look-out for opportunities of giving, not waiting to be solicited, but frequently cheering with glad surprise of help those who were doing good work in the face of disheartening difficulties. To administer his property as the Lord's steward, for the Lord's sake, he counted one of his dearest privileges, and found in it a perpetual joy. He maintained a very strict reserve as to his resources and his ways of disposing of them; but said once in public, when promising a large contribution to the Wesleyan Missionary Jubilee Fund, in Brunswick Chapel, Leeds, that he had no money investments, but trusted God. This was exactly the truth. While his income increased year by year, he spent it as it came; and at his death it was found that the great bulk of

his property consisted in the value of his numerous publications.

Mr. Smithies' room at Paternoster Row, as it was the centre of his busiest occupation, so it well represented the whole plan and method of his life. It would have been hard to find a place where more active business was done; and a more fully consecrated oratory there was not in all the land. Good men, interested in the most various kinds of good works, men of all Churches, and old friends of his early days, met there for help and counsel, or to spend a little while in loving recollections of the past; and there difficulties and wants, new enterprises of good, and grateful thanksgivings, were laid before God in prayer and praise. The warm sympathy which Mr. Smithies felt with all that was pure and loving, and with all that was aimed at lessening the world's evil and sorrow, saved him from the narrowness of bigotry, and made it possible for him to hold heartiest fellowship with Christian people irrespective of any Church distinctions. Yet he knew well the great value of what are called denominational systems, and often con-

fessed that he could not understand the formless and unorganized Christianity which affects to despise them. While he remained to the end a loyal Methodist, he was first of all a Christian; and in his unusually large circle of attached friends and co-workers, he numbered members of all Churches, and some who were members of none, rejoicing to recognise in them all members of the great common, spiritual communion, of which Christ alone is the Head.

Sectarianism has, no doubt, much mischief to answer for, wherever it has become cramped by selfishness and made arrogant by bigotry. The sectarianism of Thomas Smithies never limited his own Christian sympathy and service, nor fettered his free co-operation with any who, for the love of Christ, were ready to engage in His holy ministry of good.

If an exact portraiture were possible, it would be a delightful task to write, and do any one good to read, a full description of the home life of Mr. Smithies. Out-of-doors, his gardens, and his little farmyard, with its Alderney cows, and goats, and

poultry, and, not least, a much petted donkey, gave him unbounded pleasure; a pleasure that reached its highest point in the opportunity of using these resources for the enjoyment of his many friends, and for the comfort and help of the sick and needy.

In many respects, there is no witness to a man's worth more valuable than that which is borne by those who daily live with him, and thus see him in the unguarded freedom of his own life. There are none whose estimate of Mr. Smithies' goodness is so high as the members of his own household, and those who were in his employ. For all these he felt and manifested the kindest solicitude, and sought in every way to secure their happiness and welfare. Family worship, in which singing always had an important part, was made as attractive a service as possible.

When Mr. Smithies took the house at Wood Green, where his later years were spent, it was solemnly dedicated to the service of God; and by earnest prayer he sought direction, so that he might be able to use the place so as to make it yield the utmost possible good.

In one of his fields, during several

summers, Mr. Smithies had a great tent set up; and here a wonderful variety of most interesting meetings from time to time were held. At one time his invitation brought together an audience who came in their carriages; at another a larger company of navvies enjoyed tea in the tent, and the men were to be seen afterwards strolling in admiring delight about the gardens. On one occasion he was honoured by a visit from the Chinese Ambassador and his suite, whom he sought to interest in the philanthropic objects to which his life was devoted, and presented them with grandly bound specimens of some of his books.

Within the house was held a long series of weekly Bible-readings, which were open to all who chose to attend, and were conducted by as great a variety of Christian men as could be well imagined.

In 1877 the venerable Mrs. Smithies died, and to her memory Mr. Smithies set up in Wood Green, at the crossing of two main roads, a massive granite monument, which had at its base a drinking-fountain, and was flanked by great troughs for horses and cattle, features which, together with fitting

inscriptions, bear witness to her life and work of mercy.

Very soon after this date Mr. Smithies began to show signs of failing strength. For many years he had known that his heart was not altogether sound, but carefully kept the knowledge to himself. This fact discloses one reason of his unremitting toil. "The night cometh, when no man can work." He wrought as one who would fain crowd all possible exertion into his life, before he was overtaken by the hindering disease which he knew to be on his track. At last the time had come when his quick pace slackened, and the weakened body refused to answer the demands of his fervent spirit. By slow and unwilling degrees his work had to be done more and more at home. This was made easy by reason of the complete order in which it had long been organized; so that he could still control the machine which he had himself devised and constructed.

In these later years of comparative retirement, in which the intervals of seclusion gradually lengthened, all the character of the man, in its ripened completeness, was fully revealed. How many there are,

in all stations of life, who reckon it among their choicest privileges that they were welcome visitors at Earlham Grove! It was the rendezvous of all manner of people who were intent upon enterprises of goodness and charity. In that house was secretly formed many a conspiracy of mercy, which afterwards led to excellent results.

The spirit of the master pervaded the household. You could not enter into one of the rooms without seeing that the place of honour was given to the Bible. And this was in exact agreement with Mr. Smithies' whole inner and outward life. With him the Word of God was, with reverent familiarity, always at hand, and always foremost. He meditated in it continually. Always regretting that he had never gained the knowledge which would have admitted him into the study of the original Scriptures, he availed himself of all helps to the understanding of them; and it was very interesting to watch how fixed had become his habit of seeking the meaning of the Word for the purposes of practical godliness. He had neither the condition nor the disposition of mind to follow out the deeper questions involved in revealed truth; and

thus sometimes failed to apprehend the danger besetting certain unbalanced theories of Interpretation advocated by some whom, for the sake of their manifest goodness, he loved and trusted.

Mr. Smithies was an excellent example of obedience to the precept, "Pray without ceasing." He spent much time in actual supplication and worship. In everything he undertook he claimed, by direct simplicity of faith, the Divine guidance, holding himself free to go on or to stop as the Lord should direct him. While making no ostentation of his prayers,—"to be seen of men,"—he deemed, when amongst Christians, no time or place inopportune for petition. Thus, as one instance out of many, when in a railway train, the carriage being occupied by a party of friends who were accompanying him to a meeting in Surrey, he proposed that they should join in prayer; and thus the journey was spent in the best of all preparation for the work which awaited them. The cheerful alacrity of his confidence in this respect, always combined with the most solemn reverence, was a beautiful thing to see, and served for the help and blessing of many. Those

who watched him with the most intimate familiarity, bear witness that there was no particular of his life that did not directly refer itself to God.

Mr. Smithies was, of course, sometimes charged with being narrow in his views and methods. All men who commit their whole conscience to the doing of that which they see to be right, making no compromise with expediency, and refusing to be influenced by conventional use when principle is involved, are sure to be called narrow. Such a man we are now attempting to describe; and no doubt, in some particulars, his own simple thoroughness in following out his convictions shut him in to a way of looking at things, which sometimes made it difficult for him to appreciate the way in which others regarded them. So also, in his busy days, the unsparing and, at times, almost unresting way in which he used his own strength and resources, had occasionally led him, quite unconsciously, to somewhat overtax the patience and the energy of those who worked with him.

Mr. Smithies carried out his principles with an unyielding strictness; but any one would

be widely mistaken who should imagine him to have gone on his way like one moving in fetters. He was as far as possible from being an austere and gloomy man. There was no feature of his life more striking than its gladness. The pure mirth of his laugh moved you like that of a child. Few men ever had a keener delight in the beautiful things of nature than he; and his soul responded with liveliest sympathy to all that was bright and lovely and wonderful in the world about him. Of music as an art he knew little or nothing, but he greatly loved it, and especially loved to join in singing simple hymns set to popular melodies.

A scene which took place during the last spring of Mr. Smithies' life often recurs to the writer as very characteristic of his beloved friend. An anxious conference was being held at Earlham Grove upon a matter of grave importance which had been brought to the knowledge of Mr. Smithies. In a pause in the conversation, while a document was being drafted for presentation to a foreign ambassador, he led the way into another room, and, holding up his finger to enjoin silence, gently withdrew

the window-curtain a little way, and, with child-like glee, pointed out a blackbird sitting on her nest, which had been built in a large shrub quite close to the window. His boyish exuberance of delight, and tender care for the bird, were very beautiful; and the beauty was perfected when he hastened back to the consultation which had been resumed, and solemnly bespoke the prayers of those who were present for the success of the business in hand.

Slowly and reluctantly Mr. Smithies yielded to the necessity of curtailing his work, and one part of it after another was relinquished to other hands. He was employed to the last, and was reading proofs for the press within a few days of the end. His visits to "the Row" became fewer, and the periods of his seclusion at home steadily lengthened. While he was thus laid aside, his active sympathy with all that was good, and his vigilance on behalf of the right, knew no abatement. Thus a resolute attempt which was made in his own neighbourhood to violate the law of God by opening the Alexandra Palace on the Sunday, roused all the energies of his soul, to the great peril of his weakened body. His

house was the head-quarters of the force which was at once arrayed against this project, and from his resources the means were liberally supplied to defray the cost of opposing it. The success of that opposition gave him unbounded delight; and friend after friend was asked to join him in acts of devout thanksgiving to God Who had frustrated the threatened evil.

At last, in 1883, the days came when he could no more leave his home. With the exception of an hour now and then spent in the garden in the warm summer air, he had to keep the house. He often suffered much, especially from extreme distress caused by difficulty of breathing; but that the grace of God was sufficient for him was manifested by his unclouded cheerfulness, and the absence of anything approaching a complaint. He was as thoughtfully solicitous as ever for the comfort of those who waited upon him, and never let them doubt his gratitude for their affectionate ministrations.

It was a choice privilege, permitted now only to a very few, to sit with him in those later days of extreme weakness. In spite of warning and loving remonstrance, he

would try to tell something of the fulness of his soul, either in thankful recollections of the past, or in discussing, with unfailing interest, those enterprises of good to which he had loved to devote himself. And it was very touching to see how, with pauses of gasping for breath, the old, simple mirth sparkled in his eyes, as he told of successes won and fruit gathered for the Lord; and as the story deepened into tender memories, his voice faltered, and the bright gleam softened into tears. Then, feeling that his strength was spent, unable to move from his chair, he would reverently uncover his head, and whisper to his visitor to pray with him.

Until Midsummer he indulged the hope that he should be able to be carried to the seaside for a change; but to all those about him such a hope was clearly impossible. Day by day he grew weaker: and then he saw that the end was near, and saw it with undisturbed composure. One morning, after a restless night, he said to his sister, who had long been his companion in suffering, and was now wonderfully enabled to nurse him, "I think, unless there is some relief given, this shortness of breath cannot con-

tinue long." To her remark: "It would be a sad parting, dear Tom," he replied: "Yes, it would; but it would not be for long." "We have no doubt about our meeting-place, have we?" she said. "O, no!" was his answer, "no doubt. Blessed Lord God, the title is signed, sealed, and delivered!"

Somewhat later in the day, he directed that a message should be sent to the Noonday Prayer-meeting held in the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association in the City, begging that prayer might be offered on his behalf. "We will not," he said, "make any special request; but leave it to the Lord. All will be for the best." When noon came, he called attention to the fact that they would then be reading the requests for prayer at the Prayer-meeting; whereupon those who were in the room knelt, while he prayed: "If it please Thee, O Lord, give Thy blessing to the means used for the prolonging of life; but if not, give Thy servant grace, O Lord, to say from his heart, 'Thy will be done.' Thy will, O Lord, be done! whether for health or sickness, for life or death. Thy will be done!"

Afterwards he said, "I think I can say, 'Thy will be done.' O, why have we so little faith in God's giving answer to prayer?" As the day ended, wishing his sister good-night, he added: "'There remaineth a rest to the people of God.' Rest, rest, blessed rest, sweet rest!"

On the next day he completed his sixty-sixth year, and answered his sister's greeting in the very early morning with, "I thought it doubtful whether I should live to see my birthday. I can say that the Lord has led me more than these forty years." During the day he was frequently engaged in reading the Word of God, and at evening prayer selected the fourteenth chapter of St. John as the portion, joining with the rest, as usual, in reading his verse in turn; and then, so far as his failing breath would let him, he took part in singing, "Hallelujah! what a Saviour!" and "All the way my Saviour leads me."

In an interval of much restlessness before daybreak, he said: "If it should please our Heavenly Father to bring my life to a close, I have not a single care left as to myself. But I am concerned for my dear sister. May the Lord comfort

her! O yes, if my arm be withdrawn, His strong arm will support and protect her. I can leave it all with the Lord."

At another time, when it was thought that he was asleep, he broke into sudden praise, telling forth the comfort and joy of his whole life in the Word, and the sufficiency of its stay in the mortal crisis:

> "Father of mercies, in Thy Word
> What endless glory shines!
> For ever be Thy name adored
> For these celestial lines!"

While he was evidently suffering very much, some one said, "There will be no more pain there." "No," was his immediate response; "no sighing nor crying there. We shall meet the loved ones that have gone before. What a welcome our dear mother will give us there! No more sighing nor crying."

During the last moments before he lapsed into unconsciousness, he asked that the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans should be read to him. Then he listened with evident comfort to several passages of Scripture which were repeated, and many of them he finished himself.

One of his last utterances was: "I have

often said that I would not change places with any one in the world; and I would not change places even now." To his sister's inquiry, "Do you think that the Lord is going to take you?" he made answer, "I do not know, but all will be well, whatever be the issue."

Then silence fell upon him; and though he still lived, hours passed on in which the loving watchers beside him knew that they could have communion with him here no more. And so they waited, unable to help save by prayer, while the long summer day passed on; and in the bright calm of the early evening a deeper hush filled that hallowed chamber, and the five sisters who gathered around the bed knew that their loved brother had gone to be for ever with the Lord.

So died, on July 20th, 1883, Thomas Bywater Smithies. A few days afterwards his mortal remains were committed, with worship of Christian faith and praise, to the grave in Abney Park Cemetery, wherein, six years before, his revered mother had been laid. The multitude who took part in the service were no formal mourners. Outside the little circle of his own relatives,

there gathered many who had long known and loved him well. Men were there who had stood beside him in arduous work of many kinds, and not a few who were ready to tell, with unchecked tears, of his generous sympathy and aid.

And beyond all that funeral assembly there was a vast number, the greater part of whom had scarcely heard his name, whose lives and homes were made better for the brightness of truth and charity, temperance and pure religion, which Thomas Bywater Smithies made it the one end of his life to spread abroad.

Looked at from its merely human side, the record of Mr. Smithies' life is well worth preserving. In passing through the world, he made his mark—a permanent mark of beneficent good. Without inquiring into his principles or tracing the origin of his motives, it is beyond question that he personally did his part towards lessening the evils and advancing the good of his fellow-creatures, and did it with a large success. He forms a very instructive example of what a man may accomplish, who, without any extraordinary gifts or advanta-

geous circumstances, sets himself to do what he believes to be right, and puts all his heart into it; who does what he can as well as he can, and all the while never allows himself to lose sight of that which would be better, or to relax his efforts to reach it.

Regarded from a higher than merely human aspect, the life of Mr. Smithies deserves to be chronicled, and more adequately and worthily than in the foregoing sketch. While still very young, he inscribed as his motto this Scripture: "IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM, AND HE SHALL DIRECT THY PATHS." Throughout his whole career he steadily set himself to regulate everything by this supreme principle, and never lost an opportunity of commending it to others, especially to young people. By the grace of God he obeyed the precept; and by the grace of God the promise was richly fulfilled to him.

To God alone be praise.

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